

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01 NEA-11 /150 W

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R 070759Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2910

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ILO, ICFTU, NL

SUBJ: DUTCH REACTION TO EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

REFS: (A) EC BRUSSELS 444; (B) BONN 1424; (C) VIENNA 659;
(D) MOSCOW 1618; (E) COPENHAGEN 296; (F) LONDON 1195
(G) GENEVA 341

1. SUMMARY: NVV WAS PROFOUNDLY SKEPITICAL ABOUT JAN 19
GENEVA SESSION WITH THE EE COUNTRIES AND REMAINS SKEPTICAL
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ABOUT DESIRABILITY AND UTILITY OF FOLLOW-ON SESSIONS.

NVV RECOGNIZES, HOWEVER, EUROPEAN TRADE UNION REALITIES ARE SUCH THAT WHEN TUC, DGB AND NORDIC UNIONS WANT MEETINGS TO CONTINUE, DUTCH TRADE UNIONS CANNOT DO MUCH ABOUT IT. THEREFORE, DUTCH UNIONS VIEW THEIR TASK IN SUCH MEETINGS AS "DAMAGE LIMITATION." DESPITE THIS DISQUIET AND SKEPTICISM, NVV BELIEVES CAREFUL PREPARATION OF NEXT SESSION BY ILO GOVERNING BODY WORKER REPRESENTATIVES, UNDER STRICT ILO AEGIS, SHOULD PREVENT IT FROM DEGENERATING INTO FUZZY POLITICAL FORUM SOVIETS KEEN ON AND DUTCH ABHOR. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF DISCUSSED JAN 19 GENEVA MEETING WITH DE VRIES REILINGH, CHIEF OF NVV'S INTERNATIONAL SECTION, WHO WAS AT GENEVA MEETING AND ALSO ATTENDED DRAFTING COMMITTEE SESSION WITH NVV PRESIDENT KOK. READING FROM LENGTHY RECORD HE HAD PREPARED OF MEETING DE VRIES REILINGH PROVIDED (A) APPRAISAL OF SESSION, (B) DETAILS OF KOK'S INTERVENTION, (C) NVV IMPRESSIONS OF MEETING ATMOSPHERICS, (D) COMMENTS ON NEED FOR US UNIONS TO ADOPT MORE REALISTIC ATTITUDE ABOUT CONTACTS WITH EE.

3. APPRAISAL OF SESSION. DE VRIES BEGAN BY NOTING EAST EUROPEANS WERE "ALL SWEETNESS AND LIGHT" SINCE THEY WISHED AVOID ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT JEOPARDIZE SUCCESS OF SESSION OR PRECLUDE POSSIBILITY FOR FOLLOW-ON MEETING. NOTING ONLY THAT EE NATIONS HAVE LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN REACHING "AGREED POSITIONS," AND HAD ADVANTAGE OF WFTU SESSION TO PERFECT STRATEGY, DE VRIES CONTRASTED THIS WITH DISARRAY WITHIN ICFTU. HE SAID THERE HAD ONLY BEEN ONE INFORMAL STRATEGY SESSION THE EVENING BEFORE THE MEETING WHERE IT HAD BEEN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS. DE VRIES SAID KOK (WHO ARRIVED FOR STRATEGY MEETING ONE HOUR LATE), HAD CLEAR IMPRESSION FROM OUTSET DGB AND TUC POSITIONS FIXED AND NOTHING SMALLER UNIONS COULD DO OR SAY WOULD CHANGE THEM. DUTCH FELT HAD BEEN MADE THAT TUC WOULD NOT INSIST ON STUDY COMMITTEE AS PREREQUISITE FOR FOLLOW-ON MEETING, WHILE DGB AGREED TO REFRAIN FROM ASKING "NASTY QUESTIONS" OF EE NATIONS. THUS THERE WOULD BE NO SURPRISES WHEN ACTUAL MEETING TOOK PLACE.

4. DE VRIES SAID HE AND KOK HAD BEEN AMUSED BY SHELEPIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHARACTERIZATION OF MEETING AS "MOST HISTORICAL MEETING SINCE END OF WWII." THE SOVIET EMPHASIZED NEED FOR "UNITY OF ACTION" SINCE "UNITY OF ORGANIZATION WAS IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS TIME." DE VRIES SAID ONLY UNPLEASANT MOMENT IN SESSION CAME WHEN VETTER OF DGB ALLUDED TO "CAUSES OF SPLIT OF 1949." DUTCH NOTICED SIGNS OF AGITATION ON PART OF EE REPS. DE VRIES SAID WHEN MURRY OF TUC READ COMMUNIQUE DRAFT WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARED IN

RUSSIAN, GERMAN AND ENGLISH, NVV IMMEDIATELY ASKED FOR PHOTOSTATS. COMMUNIQUE APPROVAL SESSION WENT QUICKLY WITH SHELEPIN AGREEING READILY TO WESTERN UNIONS' INSISTANCE THAT PREPARATORY GROUP CONSISTING OF ILO WORKER REPRESENTATIVES ORGANIZE NEXT MEETING. DE VRIES SAID WHILE ILO AEGIS NOT EXPLICITLY STATED IN COMMUNIQUE, NVV CONSIDERS WORDING "HOLDING SIMILAR MEETINGS" IN PARA 3 OF COMMUNIQUE (GENEVA 341) AS RUBRIC UNDER WHICH ONE INTERPRETS THAT FUTURE MEETINGS WILL ALSO BE UNDER ILO AUSPICES.

4. KOK'S INTERVENTION DE VRIES SAID KOK'S INTERVENTION HAD BEEN PREPARED WITH SOME CARE WITHIN NVV. NVV HAD PRESUMED THINGS WOULD GO PRETTY MUCH AS THEY DID AND THAT THE SMALL DUTCH TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION WOULD HAVE NO REAL ABILITY TO BLOCK ANYTHING. DUTCH DECIDED THEY WISHED "CONTAIN DAMAGE" THAT MIGHT BE DONE, PRIMARILY BY PERSUADING FELLOW UNIONISTS TO KEEP FUTURE DISCUSSIONS ON STRICT TRADE UNION TRACK. NVV THOUGH SPECIFICALLY OF (A) ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, (B) ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS RESULTING FROM RISING MNC INVESTMENT IN EE, AND (C) HUMAN RIGHTS IN A LIMITED SENSE (APPRECIATING SOVIET SENSITIVITY ON THIS ISSUE), E.G. DISCUSSION OF TRANSFER OF PRODUCTION TO EE IN THE EVENT OF "INDUSTRIAL TURMOIL IN WEST" DE VRIES EMPHASIZED THAT NVV, WHICH DISTRUSTS SOVIETS' PREDILECTION FOR TALKING IN POLITICAL GENERALITIES, WANTED TO ENSURE THAT EE VERBAL SOLIDARITY SHOULD ALSO BE MADE MORE CONCRETE. NVV ALSO DESIRED THAT ANY FOLLOW-ON CONFERENCE BE CAREFULLY PREPARED WITHIN ILO FRAMEWORK. ANY CONFERENCE OUTSIDE THIS FRAMEWORK WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE. IN THIS CONNECTION NVV ALSO PREFERRED GENEVA VENUE FOR NEXT SESSION.

5. DUTCH CONTACTS WITH SHELEPIN DEBOFF ASKED WHETHER THERE ANY NOTABLE DUTCH CONVERSATION WITH SHELEPIN. DE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VRIES SAID HE AND KOK HAD SHAKEN HANDS WITH SOVIET TRADE UNION LEADER AND "AFTERWARDS WE HAD COUNTED OUR FINGERS." DUTCH CHARACTERIZED ATMOSPHERE OF MEETING AS "LOVE AFFAIR" AND THOUGHT SOVIETS WOULD GO TO ALMOST ANY LENGTH TO ENSURE SUCCESS OF MEETING. HE SAID THERE NO SOVIET INVITATION TO KOK TO VISIT SOVIET UNION FOR WHICH NVV THANKFUL. DE VRIES CONCLUDED BY COMMENTING NVV HAD BEEN PROFOUNDLY SKEPTICAL ABOUT MEETING AND THIS SKEPTICISM REMAINS. NEVERTHELESS, CURRENT EUROPEAN TRADE UNION REALITIES SUCH THAT THIS KIND OF MEETING WILL BE REPEATED.

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6. U.S. PARTICIPATION TURNING FROM HIS REPORT, DE VRIES REFERRED TO RECENT EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN VETTER AND MEANY. HE THOUGH VETTER'S LETTER "POOR" AND SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE FOUND MEANY'S RIGHT WING RHETORIC EXCESSIVE HE CONSIDERD MUCH OF MEANY'S ARGUMENTATION SOUND. DE VRIES TOOK UP THE THEME PROPOUNDED BY LAPPAS OF DGB (EC BRUSSELS 444) THAT AFL-CIO PARTICIPATION AS COUNTERVAILING FORCE IN FUTURE SUCH SESSIONS ESSENTIAL. ON ALLIED QUESTION OF SOVIET-EUROPEAN TRADE UNION EXCHANGES, DE VRIES SAID RECENT DUTCH VISIT TO SOVIET

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UNION (THE HAGUE A-235, DEC 19, 1973) WAS FAR LESS SATISFACTORY THAN EVEN THE NVV'S RATHER TEPID ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISIT HAD INDICATED.

7. COMMENT: DUTCH TRADE UNIONS HAVE NO ILLUSIONS ABOUT SOVIET INTENTIONS VIS-A-VIS WESTERN EUROPEAN TRADE UNIONS NOR ABOUT DUTCH ABILITY TO SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENTS. THEY CONSIDER FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EAST-WEST TRADE UNION DIALOGUE INEVITABLE AND ARE ANXIOUS THAT WEST KEEP HANDLE ON IT. DESPITE STRONG ANTI-PATHY TO PRESENT LEADERSHIP, DUTCH ARE HOPEFUL AFL-CIO WILL EVENTUALLY ABANDON ITS ISOLATION AND THAT THE TRADE UNIONS OF NEW WORLD WILL ONCE MORE REDRESS BALANCE OF THE OLD. EMBOFF HAS APPOINTMENT WITH NVV PRESIDENT KOK NEXT WEEK TO DISCUSS NVV-NKV UNITY EFFORTS AND WILL REPORT ANY ADDITIONAL SUBSTANTIVE REACTION TO OR COMMENTS ON JAN 19 GENEVA SESSION. GOULD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EAST WEST TRADE, EAST WEST MEETINGS, LABOR UNIONS, LABOR UNION OFFICIALS, LABOR OBJECTIVES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974THEHA00670
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740247/aaaabspt.tel
Line Count: 242
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) EC BRUSSELS 444; (B) BONN 1424; (C) VIENNA 659;
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAR 2002 by garlanwa>; APPROVED <01 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DUTCH REACTION TO EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE
TAGS: ELAB, NL, XG, ILO, ICFTU, NVV
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005